2.5 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED ANALYSIS

The alternatives below were considered but not analyzed in detail because of their infeasibility to attain the particular objectives or to attain benefits greater than those of the Proposed Action.

2.5.1 Alternative Sites Outside of Soledad Canyon

The formulation of alternatives began with a regional search for a mining site that would provide a long-term, economically sound source of PCC aggregates primarily to supply the Los Angeles region. Alternative mining sites were examined as possible sources of sand and gravel prior to the selection of the Project site in Soledad Canyon. Consideration of alternative sites was in part based on prior analyses and information from the federal *South Coast Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement* (BLM 1992), the *South Coast Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision* (BLM 1994), and the state *Mineral Land Classification of the Greater Los Angeles Area* (CDMG 1979), *Mineral Land Classification of the Greater Los Angeles Area, Special Report 143 Part VII* (CDMG 1983), and *Designation of Regionally Significant Construction Aggregate Resources in the Saugus-Newhall and Palmdale Production-Consumption Regions* (CDMG 1985). Together, these documents provided broad-based regional planning information used to determine the feasibility of developing mining projects on potential alternative sites. Alternative sites examined included locations in western San Bernardino County, northern Riverside County, southern Orange County, and the Antelope Valley area of Los Angeles County. The reasons that the sites were not considered further for mining or EIR analysis include the inability to obtain permits, excessive distance from the target market, excessive expense, and land use conflicts.

Western San Bernardino County. Two potential mining sites north of Redlands in western San Bernardino County were determined to be infeasible primarily because of the inability to obtain permits. The sites are located in the Santa Ana River and Plunge Creek floodplains. Barriers to procurement of permits included the presence of state and federal endangered plant and sensitive wildlife species in the area to be mined as well as conflicting land uses. The lands are considered unavailable for mineral extraction because they have been designated by the BLM as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (BLM 1992, 1994). The endangered plant species present on the sites are the slender-horned spineflower and Santa Ana River woolly star (BLM 1992, 1994).

Northern Riverside County. Two sites near Corona in northern Riverside County were rejected because of questionable material quality for the production of PCC aggregates and excessive royalty requirements given the material quality. Initial analysis showed that the quality of the material was hard and brittle, and would be suitable for base and asphalt aggregate but not PCC aggregate production. The sites are located north of Cajalco Creek between Temescal Wash and Lake Mathews to the east. Based on site hydrology, no major source of groundwater was indicated onsite to develop for use in the production of PCC aggregate. Excessive distance from the target market would result in air quality impacts from transport of the product.

Additionally, development of the sites would directly impact occupied habitat of the endangered Stephens' kangaroo rat, sensitive Riversidian coastal sage scrub habitat, and riparian scrub habitat.

Southern Orange County. Two sites in southern Orange County off Ortega Highway were rejected as alternatives to the Soledad Canyon site because of the questionable quality of the material, the significant distance from the target market, and excessive development costs of the sites. Because the sites are approximately 70 miles from the primary market, they would have associated high costs to haul the aggregate material as well as air quality impacts. A distance of approximately 30 highway miles is considered the maximum distance for economically feasible delivery of PCC aggregates (CDMG 1987a). Appendix E4 provides information on increased emissions and costs associated with an assumed site that would be 30 miles more distant than the TMC Project site from the primary market.

The sites would result in environmental impacts on sensitive habitats including coastal sage scrub, oak woodlands, wildlife movement corridors, and cultural resources. Additionally, based on conclusions drawn from the state review of aggregate material production and consumption (CDMG 1983), the aggregate reserves in the Orange County-Temescal Valley P-C Region are not sufficient to supply the Los Angeles region as well as its own needs without greatly accelerating the depletion of available reserves.

Antelope Valley. A site near the town of Littlerock in Antelope Valley was considered for the project. However, this site was determined to be infeasible because of the distance from TMC's primary market. The Littlerock site is approximately 65 miles from the Los Angeles region and would result in additional costs to haul the material as well as increased air quality impacts. Therefore, the Littlerock site would not provide a reliable and economically viable source of PCC aggregates.

Additionally, taking aggregate reserves from the Palmdale-Littlerock production area to supply the Los Angeles region could accelerate the depletion of available reserves for the Palmdale-Littlerock P-C Region based on figures of available reserves (CDMG 1987a).

Other environmental concerns at the site included impacts on Joshua tree woodland and habitat for the State Threatened Mohave ground squirrel, the federally threatened desert tortoise, Le Conte's thrasher, and the San Diego coast horned lizard.

Ventura County. A site in Moorpark, which TMC ultimately acquired, was considered as an alternative for the Project. However, the Moorpark site has a high amount of sand (88 percent) in relation to the gravel (12 percent) content of the aggregate material. In contrast, the Soledad Canyon Project site contains approximately 70 percent gravel. To meet the Project objective to supply the Los Angeles market with construction minerals, the Moorpark site could not produce enough gravel without mining excessive amounts of material. An excessively high production level and increased transport distance would not result in a reliable and economically viable source of gravel for the Los Angeles region. Additionally, development of this site

primarily for the Los Angeles market could accelerate the depletion the Western Ventura P-C Region aggregate reserves based on figures of available reserves from the State (SMGB 1993).

Angeles National Forest. A mining site in the Angeles National Forest was considered as an alternative to the Project site but was determined to be infeasible because the material quality was not proven to provide an adequate supply of PCC aggregates. There also was lack of access to the general area and the site.

Creating access to the site would involve cutting a road through forest land with loss of native habitat and impact on the visual quality of the forest. Additionally, the site was not offered for mineral lease by the BLM.

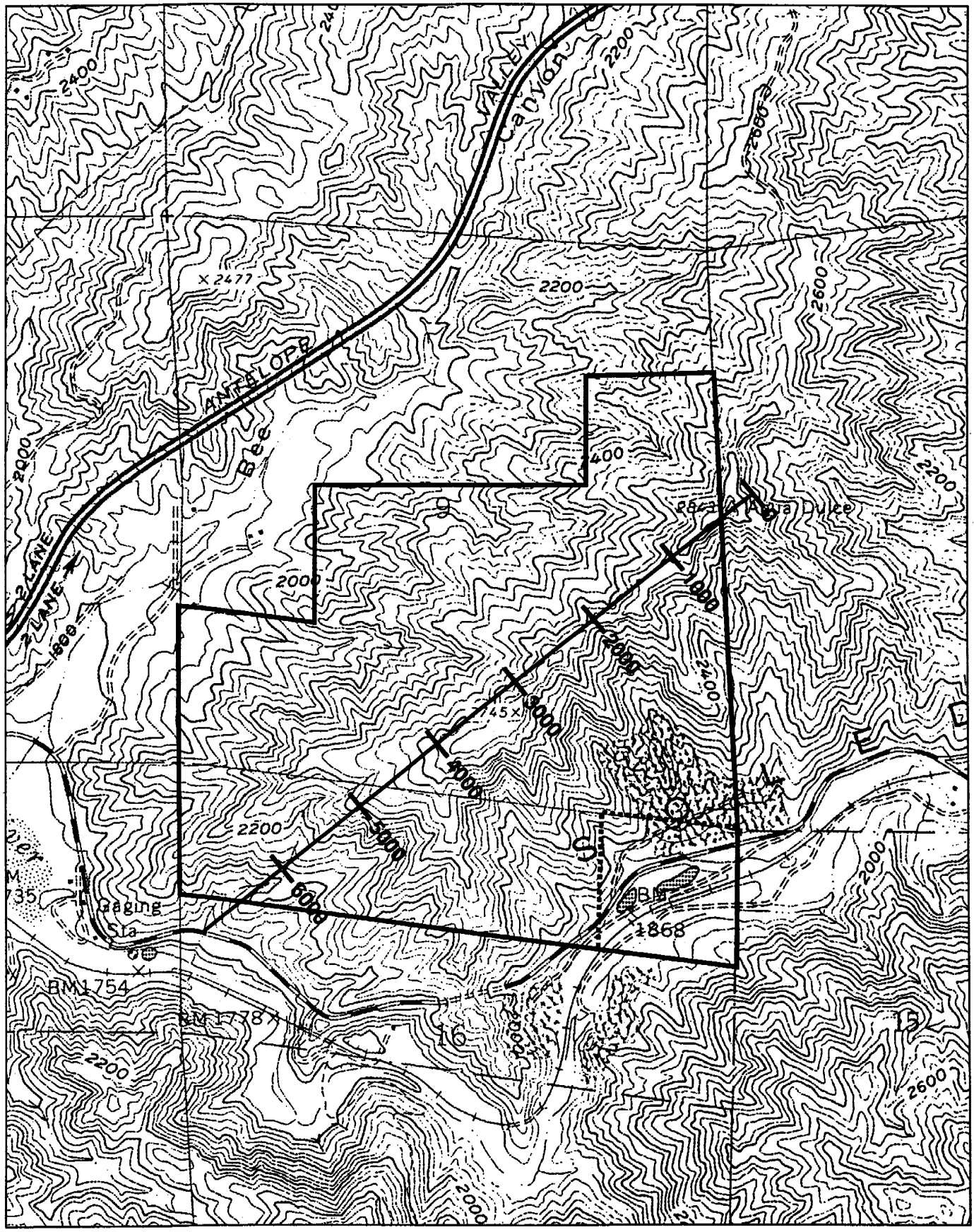
2.5.2 Original Mining Concept

The original mining concept for the Soledad site consisted of mining the entire ridge from the top down and removing up to 170 million tons of product versus the 56 million tons of product proposed under the Proposed Action. Under the original concept, mining would have consisted of five phases over 20 years. The original mining plan is presented on Figures 2.5-1 through 2.5-8. This alternative involved mining over three times the amount of product as compared to the Proposed Action. Accordingly, impacts on most resources, except land use, would have been incrementally greater. Implementation of mitigation measures similar to those proposed for the Proposed Action would have reduced impacts on these resources. However, even after mitigation, significant impacts would have remained for air quality and visual resources, and an incremental increase in water usage would have resulted. While this alternative would have attained the Project objectives, in its overall concept, it would not have provided any additional means of reducing or eliminating significant adverse environmental effects to levels below what the Proposed Action will provide. Therefore, the original mining concept alternative was eliminated from further consideration.

2.5.3 Alternative Fines Storage Using Offsite Landfills

This alternative considered fines disposal areas at regional landfills rather than onsite as proposed for the Proposed Action. Under this alternative, the fines would be disposed of as fill in existing or proposed regional landfills.

Most landfills are already near capacity and do not need fill material; therefore, using landfills for fines disposal could be considered a significant impact on public services. Additionally, environmental impacts associated with proposed landfills would have to be considered if the fines were not stored as presently proposed (Proposed Action). Existing landfills in the region are facing pressure to extend their longevity, and proposed sites for new regional landfills face great public resistance. The California Integrated Waste Management Board specifically requested that the location of fines placement (solid waste disposal) be identified for the Proposed Action and recommended that inert fines be reused onsite.



Feet
0 1330
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Base Map Source: USGS 1:24,000 series
Agua Dulce, CA

STATION NUMBERS FOR CROSS-SECTIONS FOR TMC SOLEDAD CANYON SITE ORIGINAL MINING PLAN ALTERNATIVE

Figure 2.5-1

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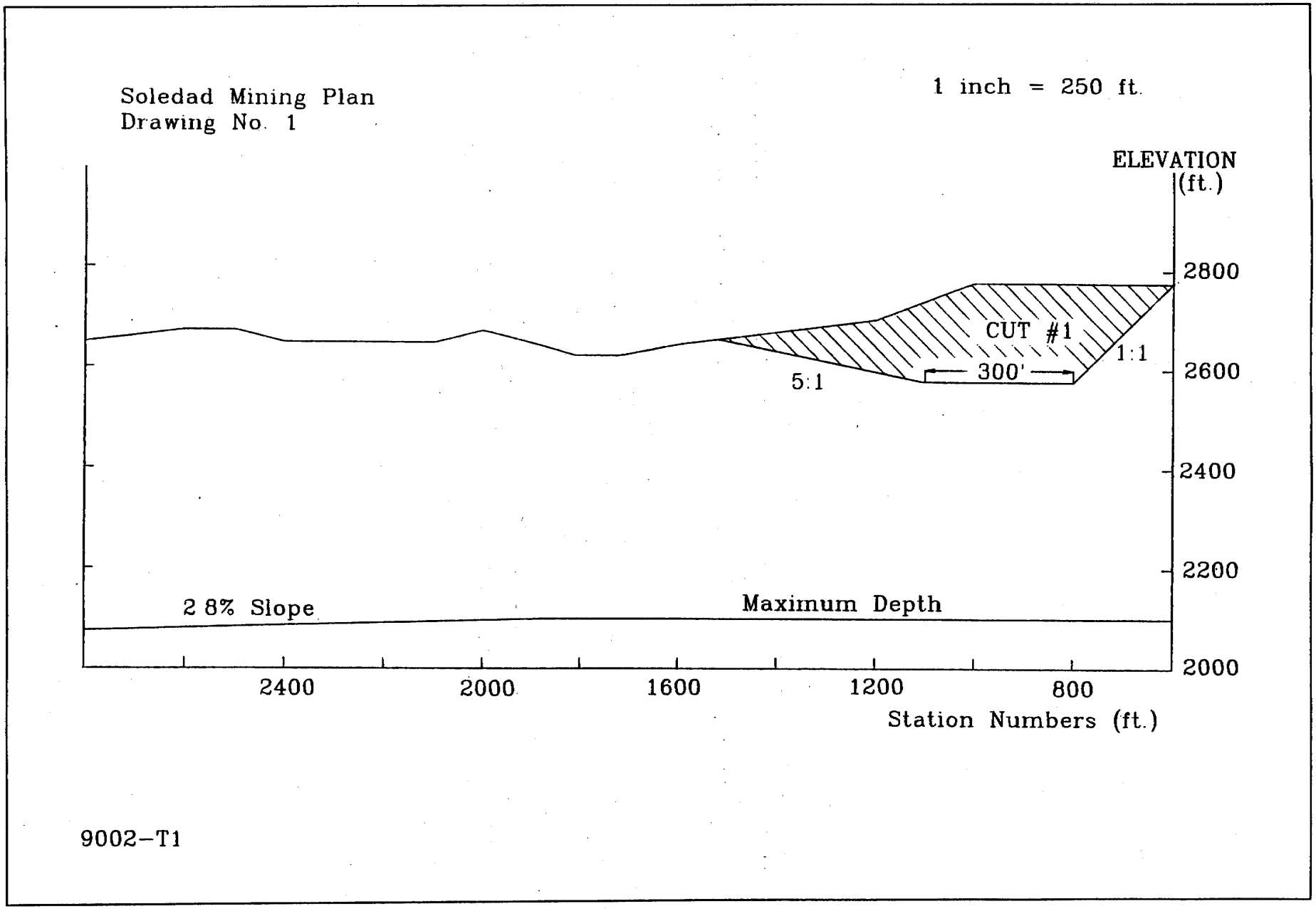

CUT 1 - SOLEDAD CANYON SITE
ORIGINAL MINING PLAN ALTERNATIVE
Figure 2.5-2

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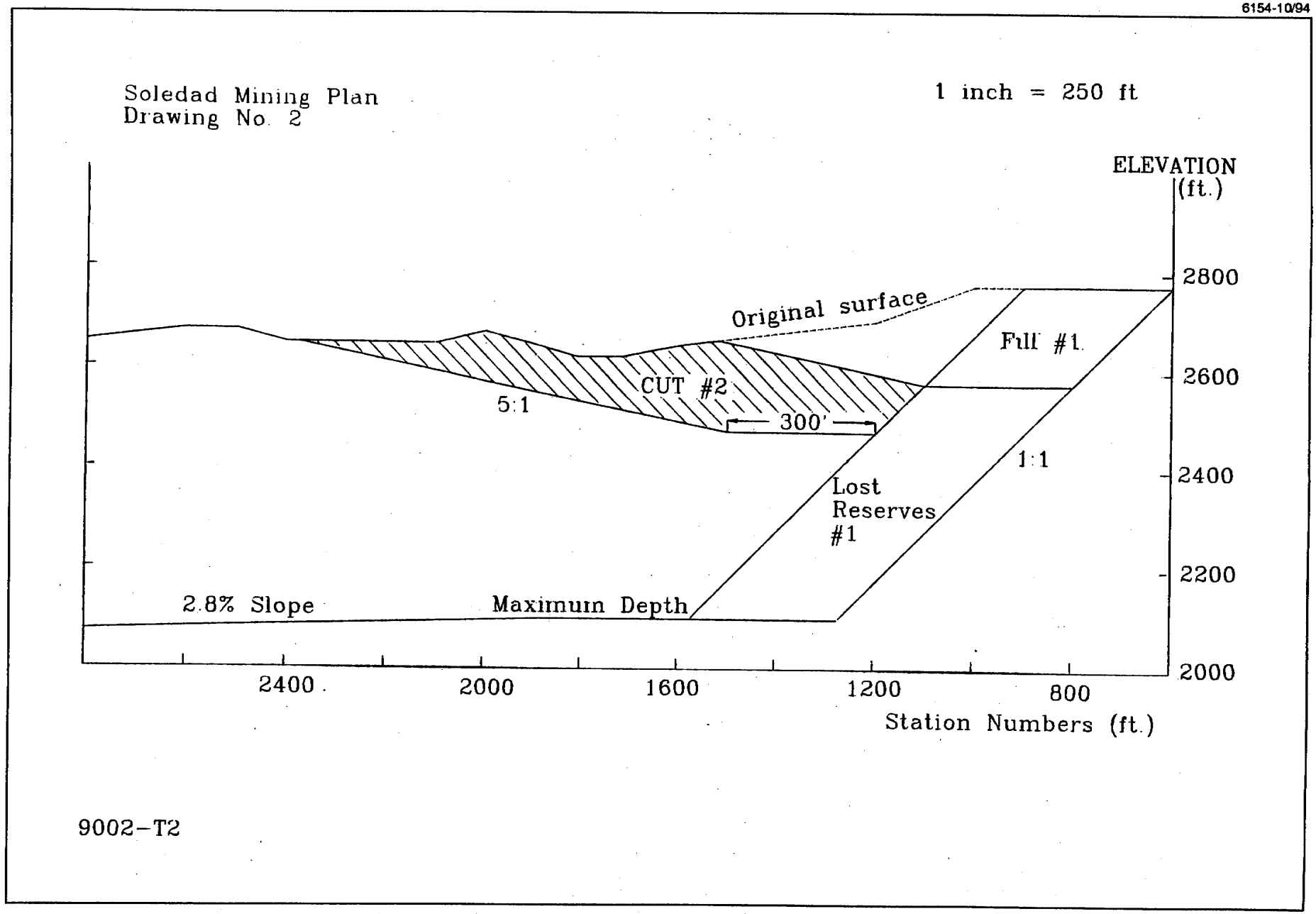

CUT 2 - SOLEDAD CANYON SITE
ORIGINAL MINING PLAN ALTERNATIVE
Figure 2.5-3

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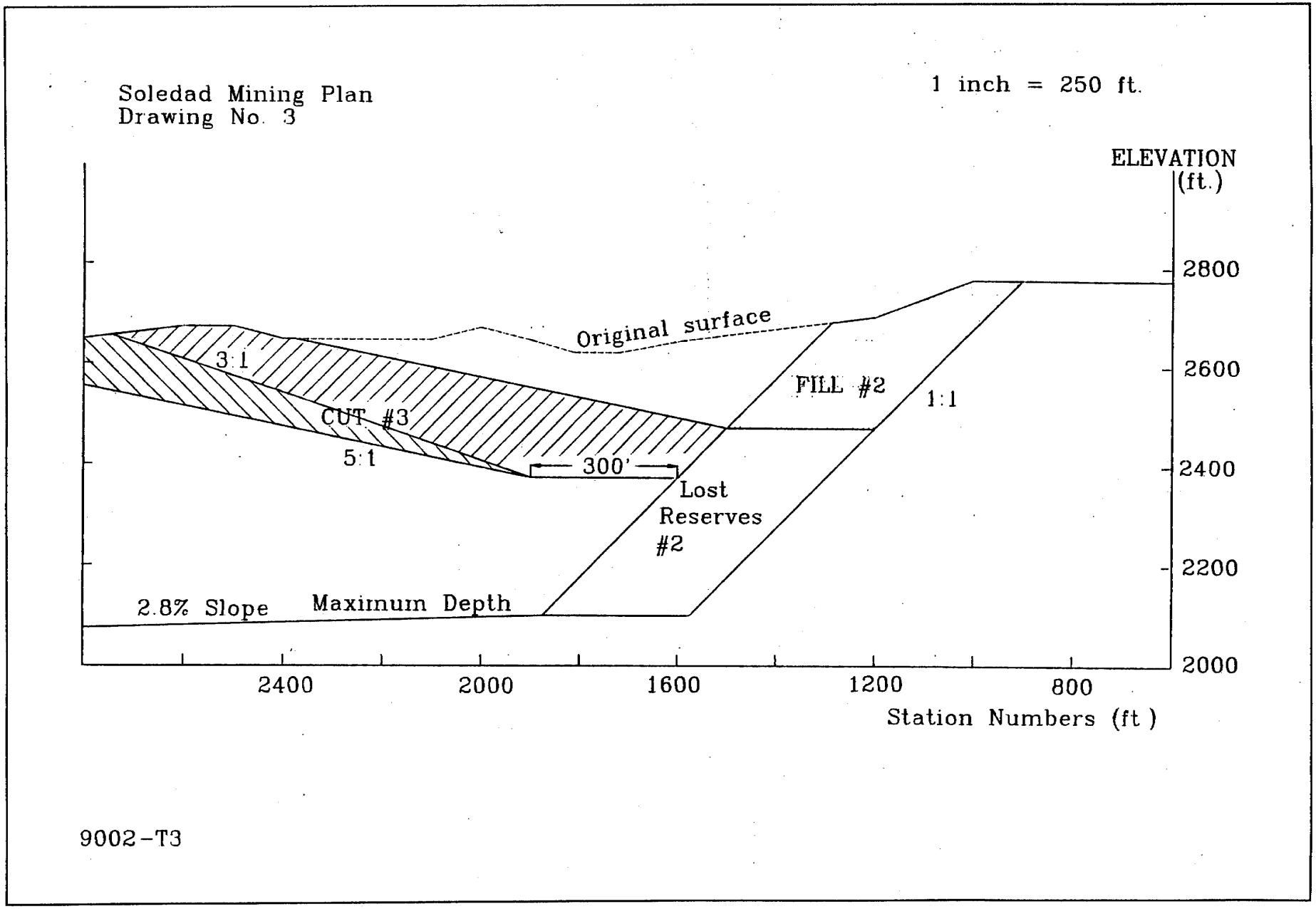
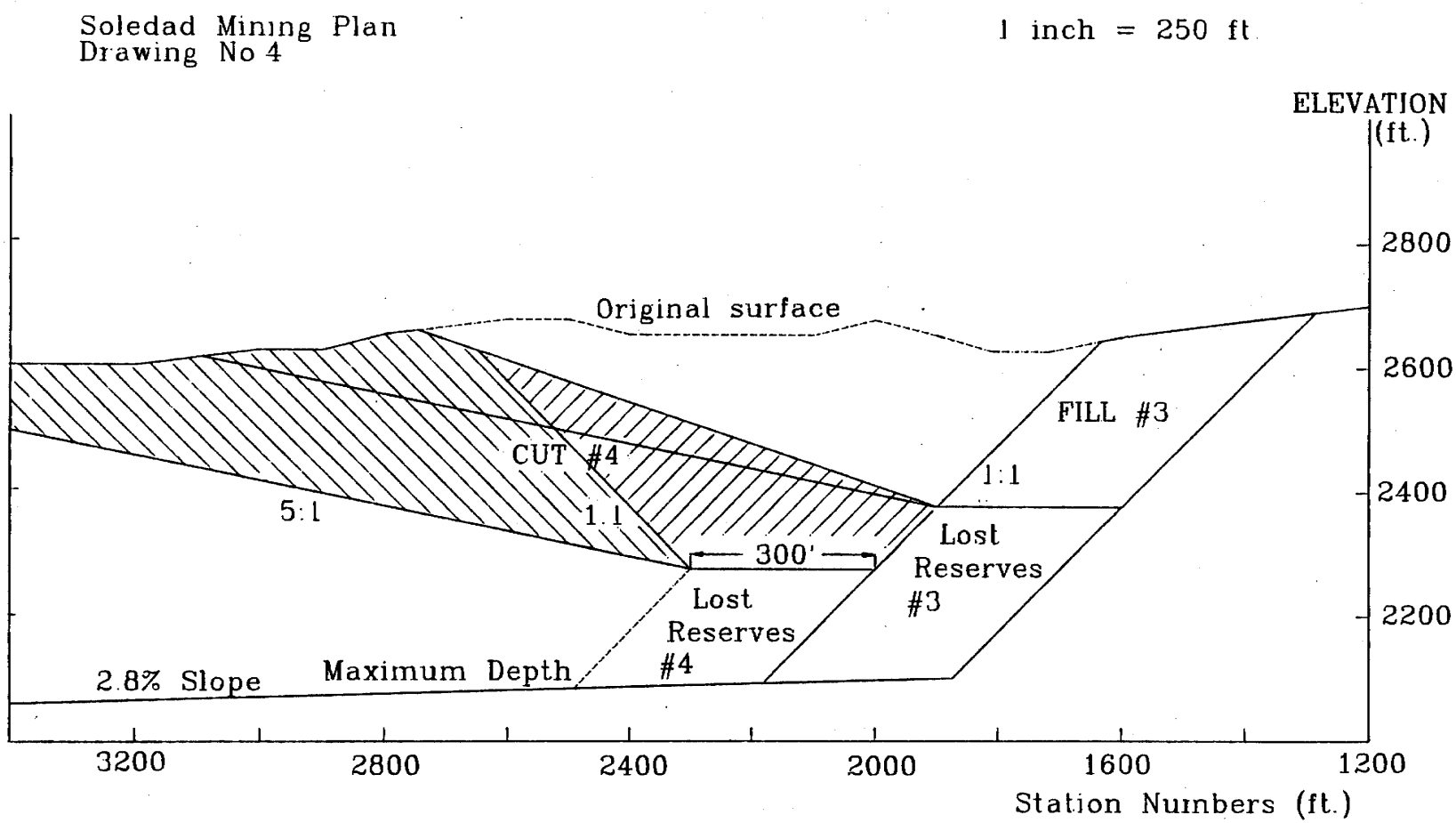
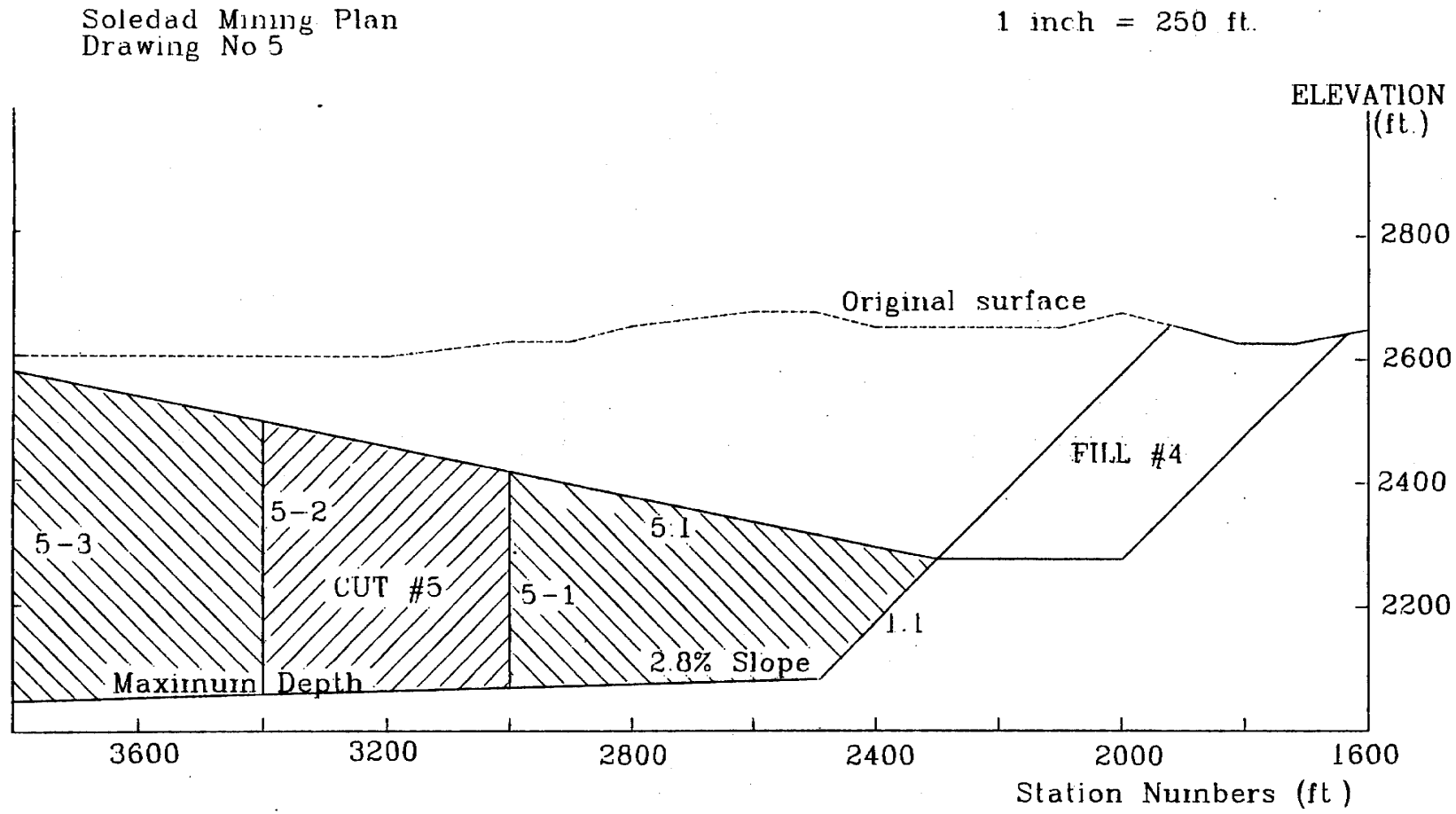


CUT 3 - SOLEDAD CANYON SITE
ORIGINAL MINING PLAN ALTERNATIVE
Figure 2.5-4



CUT 4 - SOLEDAD CANYON SITE
ORIGINAL MINING PLAN ALTERNATIVE
Figure 2.5-5



CUT 5 - SOLEDAD CANYON SITE
ORIGINAL MINING PLAN ALTERNATIVE
Figure 2.5-6

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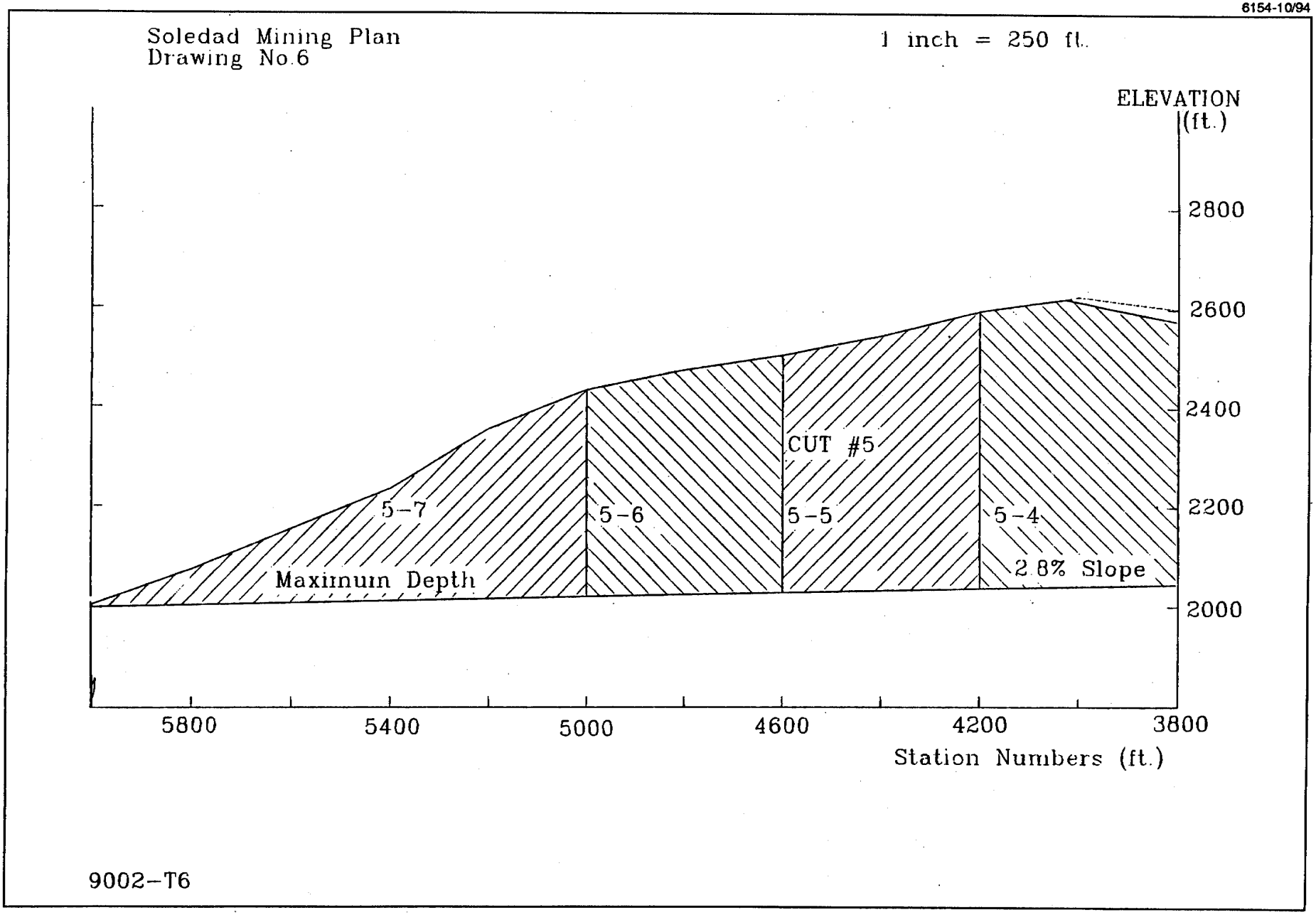
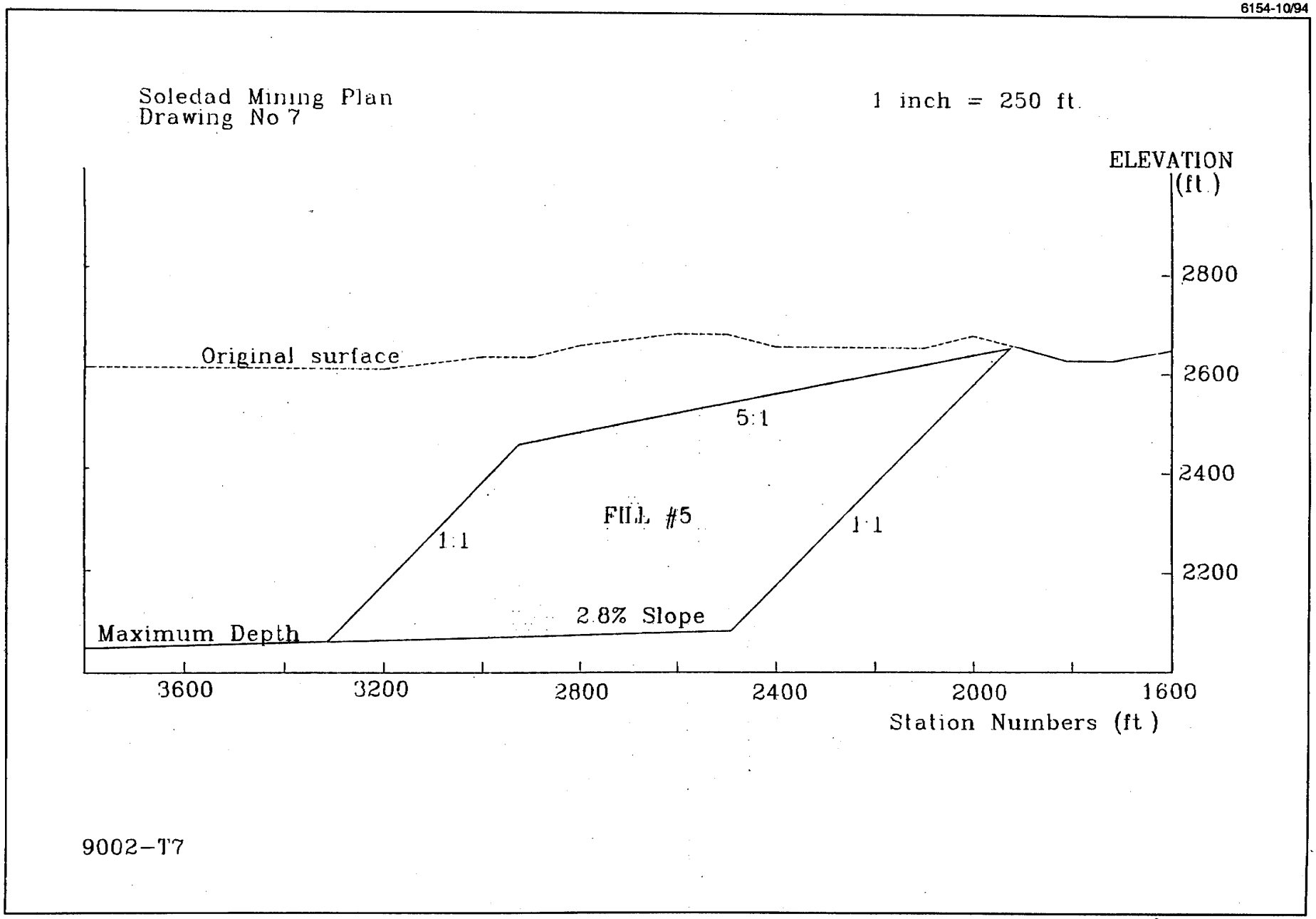


CUT 5 (Continued) - SOLEDAD CANYON SITE
ORIGINAL MINING PLAN ALTERNATIVE
Figure 2.5-7

6154-10/94



CUT 5 (Continued) - SOLEDAD CANYON SITE
ORIGINAL MINING PLAN ALTERNATIVE
Figure 2.5-8

This alternative was not considered in detail because air quality and traffic impacts associated with hauling fines to the landfills would be substantially greater than the impacts associated with the Proposed Action and is not economically feasible. The following sections outline the landfills that were considered in the analysis. Figure 2.5-9 shows the locations of the landfills considered.

2.5.3.1 County Landfills

Four landfills within the County are operated by the Sanitation District of Los Angeles County. The landfills are public sites and accept both municipal and commercial refuse. These landfills include the following:

- Puente Hills Landfill located in Whittier. The intake limit is 13,200 tons per day, with a 6-day average limit of 12,000 tons. The permitted capacity remaining as of December 1995 was 29.3 million tons. The landfill is currently permitted through 2003; however, a proposed expansion will add another 10 years of landfill capacity. Currently, the landfill does not need soil for cover, and soil (fines) would be accepted for disposal only.

- Spadra Landfill located in Walnut. The landfill is owned by Cal Poly Pomona and operated by the Sanitation District. Current peak daily tonnage is 3,700 tons per day, with a weekly limit of 15,000 tons. Remaining capacity, as of December 1995, was 2.2 million tons. The landfill is projected to close in 1999 if no further expansion is proposed. At one time, the landfill needed approximately 700,000 cubic yards of uncontaminated soil/fill for cover.

- Scholl Canyon Landfill located in Glendale. The landfill is owned by the city and operated by the Sanitation District. Scholl Canyon Landfill is a restricted wasteshed and only serves a limited number of cities in its vicinity. The limit is 3,400 tons per day. Remaining capacity as of December 1995 was 10.9 million tons, and projected closure is in the year 2015.

- Calabasas Landfill located in Agoura. The landfill is owned and operated by the County. Calabasas is also a restricted wasteshed that serves a limited area. The peak daily tonnage limit is 3,500. Remaining capacity as of December 1995 was 15 million tons, and projected closure is in the year 2013.

2.5.3.2 Private Landfills

Sunshine Canyon Landfill is the only privately owned landfill operating in the Project area. The landfill Applicant has been pursuing landfill expansions to ultimately develop a combined 90-million-ton solid waste landfill within the city and County portions of Sunshine Canyon. The County expansion area began operations in August 1996 and has 16.9 million tons of capacity and a maximum daily disposal rate of 6,600 tpd. The Applicant has processed an application

and completed a supplemental EIR for a 55-million-ton expansion within the city. The landfill would accept fines for disposal.

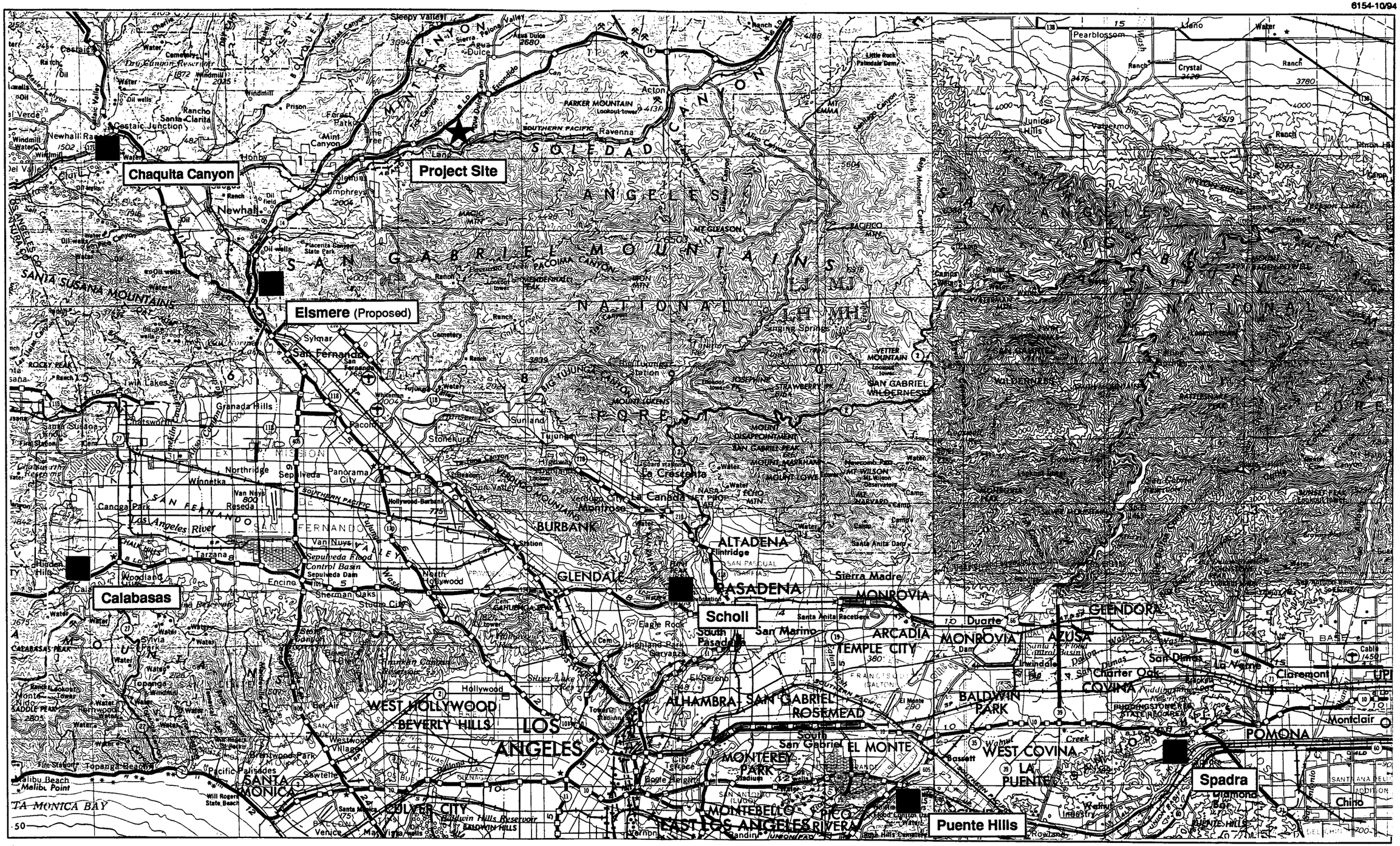
Chaquita Canyon Landfill is a Class II landfill located in Valencia. The landfill does not need additional soil for cover, and soil (fines) would be accepted for disposal only.

2.5.3.3 Proposed Landfills

According to the 1996 Draft Countywide Siting Element prepared by the Los Angeles Department of Public Works (DPW 1996), six sites have been identified as potential new landfills within the county. These sites are Blind Canyon, Browns Canyon, Elsmere Canyon, Mission-Rustic-Sullivan Canyons, Towsley Canyon, and Toyon Canyon. The majority of these identified sites have severe constraints on development, making landfill development infeasible.

Browns and Toyon Canyons have been previously rejected by the County on the basis of technical infeasibility due to site geologic concerns. The majority of the property within Blind Canyon has been included in an agreement that would transfer 4,500 acres of the property to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for use as regional parkland. The Mission-Rustic-Sullivan Canyons are located within the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. New landfills cannot be sited in National Recreation Areas pursuant to federal regulation 36 CFR, part 6, "Solid Waste Disposal Sites In Units Of The National Park System." Property acquisitions in Towsley Canyon by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy most likely preclude its development as a landfill.

An EIS/EIR has been prepared for Elsmere Canyon under the following co-lead agencies: the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning and the U.S. Forest Service. The report was released for public and agency review in early 1995. However, federal legislation was passed that prohibits development of the Elsmere Canyon Landfill on U.S. Forest Service land. It is unknown whether there will ultimately be landfill development in or near Elsmere Canyon.



LOCATIONS OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED LANDFILLS IN THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Figure 2.5-9